

Engaging Parents in Healthy School Communities

Shaping the Future 2012

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What is a healthy school community?

- **Comprehensive School Health**: four distinct, but inter-related pillars that encompass the whole school environment:

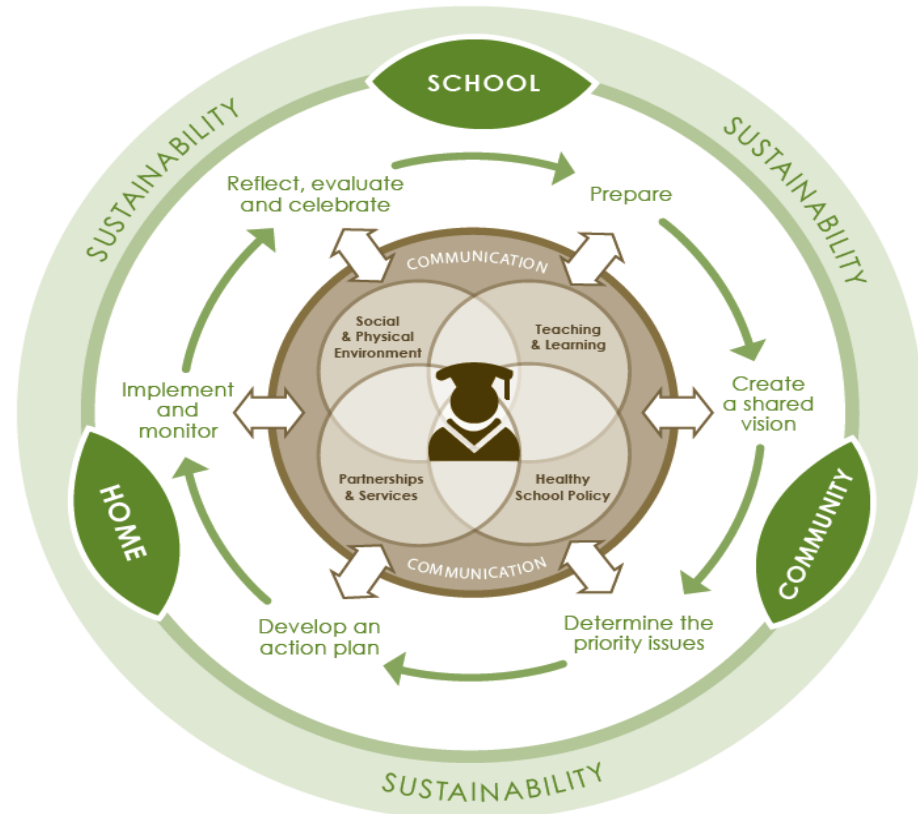
- Social and physical environment;
- Teaching and learning;
- Healthy school policy; and
- Partnerships and services.



Wellness Priorities for Healthy School Communities in Alberta

- Three priority areas
 - Healthy Eating
 - Active Living
 - Positive Social Environments

- Process



Alberta Health Services. (n.d.). *Tool Kit for Health Champions: Working through the phases*. Joint Consortium for School Health. (2008). *What is Comprehensive School Health?* Retrieved February 28, 2011, from http://eng.jcsh-cces.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=40&Itemid=62
 Queensland Government. (2005). *Health Promoting Schools Toolbox: Booklet 2 – how do we do it?...the process*. Retrieved February 28, 2011 from <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/healthyschools/toolbox.asp>

Successes and Challenges



Success



Challenge

Parent and Teacher Surveys

- Why do you think some parents don't get involved in school activities?
- What could be done to change or overcome these barriers?
- In what ways would you like parents to be involved in school activities?
- What would make it easier for parents to participate in school activities?

Why do you think some parents don't get involved in school activities?

Parent Survey:

- *Time constraints*
- *Comfort level*
- “Don't know how”
- “Fear”
- “Shy because of low level of education or bad school experiences”

Teacher Survey:

- *Time constraints*
- *Comfort level*
- “Think they aren't smart enough to offer anything of value”

What could be done to change or overcome these barriers?

Parent Survey:

- Increased variety of opportunities
- More inviting/welcoming environments
- Better orientation at the beginning of the school year
- Change of hours for activities/allow younger siblings to attend

Teacher Survey:

- *More social functions*
- Offer incentives for parents
- Phone calls and personal invitation
- Invite them in for an orientation to the school

In what ways would you like parents to be involved in school activities?

Parent Survey:

- *Increased informal opportunities to get to know the teacher better*
- Build a inventory of parent and community skills/interests
- Have sign up sheet with **specific** tasks for each activity

Teacher Survey:

- *Field trips*
- *Supervision*
- Offer cultural activities
- “Whatever parents would like to do, I’ll accommodate them”

What would make it easier for parents to participate in school activities?

Parent Survey:

- *Quit work*
- Give specific tasks (know exactly what's needed and when)
- Give contact person
- Working in small groups with other parents

Teacher Survey:

- *Flexibility (with parent work and school activities/meeting times)*
- *Provide childcare*
- Having a protocol or process for parent involvement
- “I’m not sure how to get our society to slow down!”

Parent Involvement in Healthy School Communities

Healthy School Policy:

Be part of the policy development process

Partnerships and Services:

Become a member of the Wellness Committee or a School – Community action group

Teaching and Learning:

Support and participate in school wellness events

Social and Physical Environment:

Volunteer!

How Can Parent Involvement Be Supported?

- By the School District?
- By the School Staff?
- By the Parent Council?
- By Health Partners (Alberta Health Services, etc.)?



Time for action!

**Take a few moments to complete the action plan for
your school/work.**

Key Resources for Parents



Alberta
School Councils' Association

www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca



www.everactive.org



[www.achsc.org/wellness
fund.htm](http://www.achsc.org/wellnessfund.htm)

Handbook:
bit.ly/wellnessfund



www.albertahealthservices.ca

Thank you!

Questions?